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National  
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Center

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Iran*

# Iraq's Shia Community

An Intelligence Memorandum

Secret

PA 80-10464  
October 1980

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Iraq's Shia Community ☐

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**Summary**

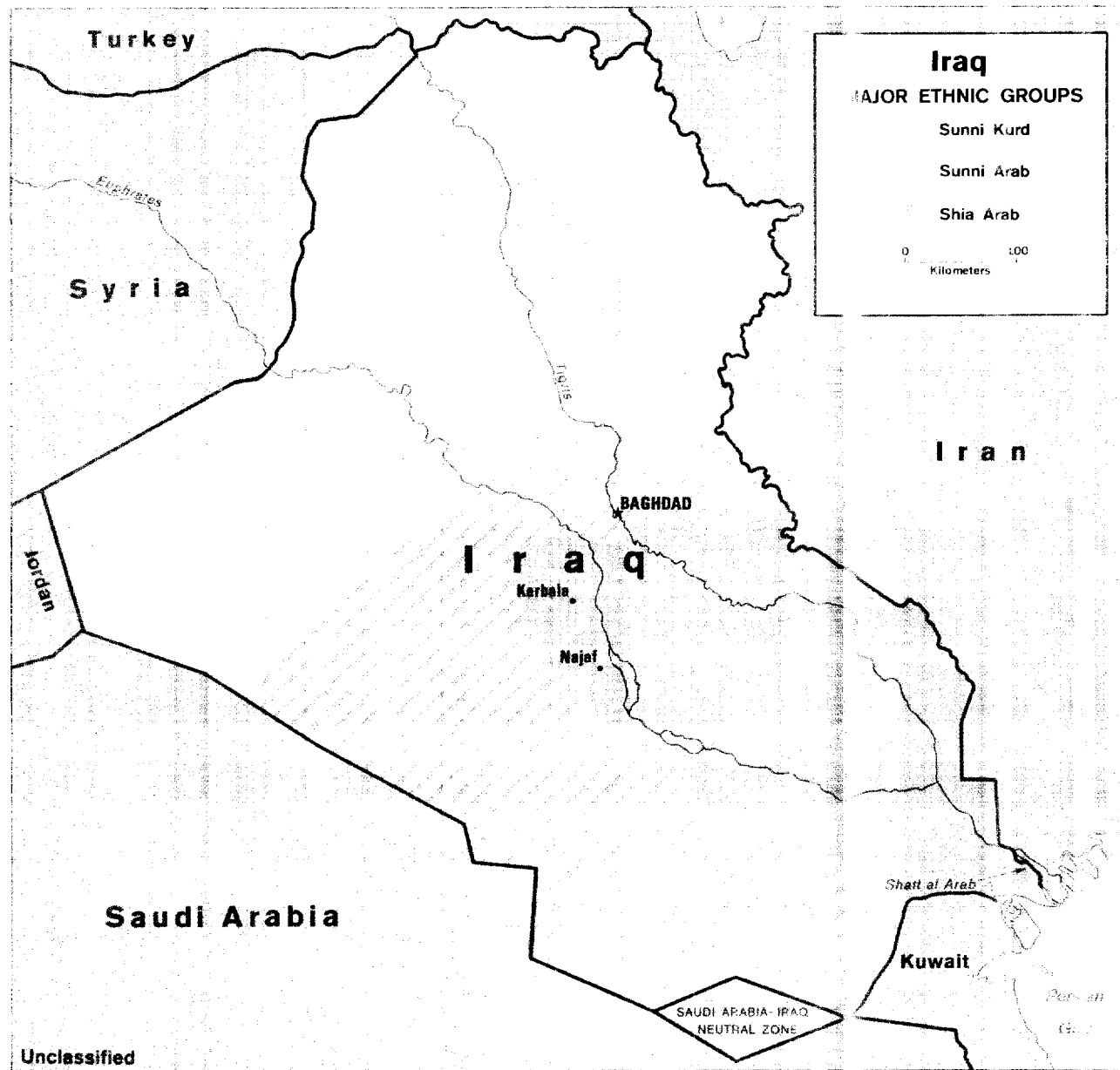
Ayatollah Khomeini and Iranian clerics have repeatedly called for Iraq's Shia Muslims to overthrow the Sunni-dominated government of President Saddam Hussein. The intensity of those appeals and the receptivity of Iraq's Shia majority to them are likely to increase in mid-November, the beginning of Muharram, a month-long commemoration of the martyrdom of the seventh-century Shia Imam, Hussein. This emotional period could spark renewed Shia dissidence. We believe that the principal threat to Saddam in this event would be from his Sunni associates, who might act to replace Saddam to quell Shia restiveness. ☐

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*This memorandum was ☐ Southwest Asia Analytic Center, Near East South Asia Division, Office of Political Analysis. It has been coordinated with the National Intelligence Officer for the Near East and South Asia, the Directorate of Operations, the Office of Strategic Research, and the Office of Geographic and Societal Research. Comments and queries are welcome and may be addressed to the Chief, Southwest Asia Analytic Center, Near East South Asia Division, ☐. Information available through 21 October 1980 was used in the preparation of this memorandum. (U)*

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Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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